



Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

News

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Supreme Court approves senior status for Justice, Judge, Magistrates

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia has voted in Administrative Conference to approve senior status applications for one retiring Supreme Court Justice, one retiring Circuit Court Judge, and eleven retiring Magistrates.

Retired judicial officers who wish to be appointed to serve as Senior Status Justices, Judges, or Magistrates must apply for that position to the Supreme Court; it is not automatic upon leaving office.

The Court approved the reinstatement of senior status, as of January 1, for former Justice Thomas E. McHugh, who retired for a second time on December 31.

Justice McHugh was elected to the Supreme Court most recently in 2010 to a two-year term. He had begun sitting by Designation as Senior Status Justice on the Supreme Court on September 1, 2008, when the Chief Justice appointed him to serve during the illness of Justice Joseph Albright, and he was reappointed on January 1, 2009, for the same purpose. After the death of Justice Albright on March 20, 2009, Chief Justice Brent Benjamin appointed him to serve in Justice Albright's position until the Governor named a replacement. On April 8, 2009, then-Governor Joe Manchin III appointed Justice McHugh to the Supreme Court to serve until the 2010 general election. At that time he was elected to complete Justice Albright's twelve-year term, which ended December 31.

Justice McHugh previously was elected to the Court in 1980 and was re-elected to a second twelve-year term in 1992. He served as Chief Justice in 1984, 1988, 1992, 1995 and 1996. He retired on December 31, 1997. He then practiced law in the Charleston law firm of Allen Guthrie McHugh and Thomas, where he was of counsel. He now is of counsel to the Charleston law firm Bowles Rice, LLP.

The Court also granted senior status to Twenty-Sixth Judicial Circuit (Lewis and Upshur Counties) Judge Thomas H. Keadle. Judge Keadle announced last month that he will be retiring on February 1, when his senior status will begin. His last day in office will be January 31.

The Court has granted senior status, as of January 1, to the following magistrates:

- William D. Anderson of Marshall County, who was defeated in the Democratic primary after serving a total of 26 years as a magistrate.

- Kim M. Blair of Putnam County, who was defeated in the Republican primary after serving 10 years as a magistrate.
- Joan V. Bragg of Berkeley County, a Democrat who did not seek re-election after serving almost 25 years as a magistrate.
- D. Frances Davis of Doddridge County, a Republican who did not seek re-election after serving 28 years as a magistrate.
- Charles L. Garvin, III, of Fayette County, a Democrat who did not seek re-election after serving seven years as a magistrate.
- Donna Jackson of Wood County, a Democrat who did not seek re-election after serving for 20 years as a magistrate. She will become the judge of the West Central Regional Drug Court.
- Mary H. Jennings of Raleigh County, a Democrat who lost in the general election after serving for 25 years as a magistrate.
- Janet Kershner-Vanover of Pocahontas County, a Democrat who lost in the general election after serving a total of nine years as a magistrate.
- Sandra L. Miller of Berkeley County, a Democrat who did not seek re-election after serving 20 years as a magistrate.
- James D. “Dan” Moody of Lewis County, a Republican who lost in the general election after serving 35 years as a magistrate.
- Janice L. Wiseman of Fayette County, who lost in the Democratic primary after serving since her appointment to the post in December 2010. She previously served 16 years as executive assistant to two Supreme Court Justices and 12 years as magistrate assistant to her predecessor, former Magistrate Joe Parsons.